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The Commonweal

June 22, 1951

THE LAST HOPE ON EARTH

Francois Mauriac

Wallpaper Metaphysics

Notes on Modern Art

Hans Sahl

Volume LIV 15c Number 11

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"For the Continual Prayer of a just man availeth much"

St. James 5:16

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• THIS WEEK •

Week by Week 251

The Last Hope on Earth
by Francois Mauriac 255

The Message of Dean Manion
by John C. Cort 258

The Stage
by Walter Kerr 260

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 261

Of Note 263

Wallpaper Metaphysics
by Hans Sahl 263

Books 266

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

THE WISDOM OF '20-20 HINDSIGHT'

AT ONE point in the testimony he gave to the investigating committees of the Senate, Secretary Acheson made reference to the actions taken by the United States in 1948 to assist the Chinese Nationalist Government at a particularly critical stage of the civil war in China. He spoke of the China Aid Act of 1948, the provisions of which he had summarized for the Senators a few minutes earlier (the act provided for $400,000,000 worth of economic and military aid), and he said: "The reason that I dwelt on that aid bill of 1948 was that that was the last chance that there existed to take the view, if anybody wanted to take the view, that the United States should commit unlimited resources and its armed forces to the struggle in China. If the United States had wanted to do that, that was the last time it could do it."

Here, one would think, was the moment the Republican Senators had been waiting for; here was their opportunity to ask all those embarrassing questions. Surely the Republicans would want to show at this point that the United States should have made up its mind then and there in 1948 to go all-out in an effort to save China from Communist conquest.

For his part, the Secretary had already presented the Administration's reasons for not going all-out in China. He explained that despite our economic and military aid, and despite our efforts to mediate in the civil war in such a way as to bring about the formation of a democratic government in which the Nationalists would have had the majority power, the position of the Nationalist Government steadily deteriorated until nothing but American military intervention could have saved the situation. This, said the Secretary, was a course of action that our military leaders advised against. Such intervention, he said, was also repugnant to the wishes of the American people at the time.

It would seem that, in answer to Mr. Acheson's argument, one might try to present at least a plausible case to show that the Administration had not foreseen in 1945, as it should have, the full seriousness of the Far Eastern situation and if, to save China, it was necessary in 1948—as it would have been—to mobilize part of the American armed forces in order to support Chiang in the same way that we supported the anti-Communists in Greece, then it was the Administration's duty to have explained this to the American people at the time and to have aroused them, if possible, to an awareness of the oncoming danger threatening the peace and security of the Far East and of the world as a whole.

Something like this is the line of argument that one would have expected the Republicans to pursue immediately after Secretary Acheson had made his remark. But as a matter of fact, they did not do so.

The reason they did not is, of course, quite obvious. It was the Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress that passed the China Aid Act of 1948; the late Senator Vandenberg was then the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and in the report he submitted regarding this act, he said, on behalf of the Republican - controlled committee: "We cannot underwrite the destiny of China. . . . It is impossible to know the quantity and type of aid necessary for the restoration of a stable and independent China. The committee is convinced, however, that the assistance contemplated in this bill should appreciably strengthen the position of the National Government without, at the same time, involving the United States in any additional commitments of a military nature."

The record clearly shows that in 1948 the Republicans did not care "to take the view that the United States should commit unlimited resources and its armed forces to the struggle in China." So by way of replying to the Secretary's remark, the Republicans had only silence to offer.

YET today the Republicans seek to create the impression throughout the country, in their bid for political power in 1952, that it is the Democrats alone who are responsible for our Far Eastern troubles, and they seek to imply that if the Republicans had been in charge of the State Department, this whole business would never have happened.

Senator Brien McMahon refuses to fall for this sham. He produced the records of the Foreign Relations Committee covering the years from 1947 to 1949 and he said that, so far as he could find, "there was not a single, solitary suggestion" made for "a change of policy," and no "disagreement with policy" was registered "by any member of the committee."

"There are some things in this record," said McMahon, "that will undoubtedly embarrass some Senators who are trying to prove some-

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thing different than they advocated at the time." Confronted with the facts and with Mr. McMahon's vigorous presentation of them, Republican Senator Wiley lamely responded that "there are a lot of funny things that were said that might lend to the humor of the occasion" at the expense of the Democrats, too.

AND so it went. Throughout all Mr. Acheson's testimony, whenever a showdown came the Republicans were unable to produce any substantial evidence whatever to establish their present claim to wisdom and foresight regarding our Far Eastern policy. As Senator McMahon so aptly put it, they have been displaying a rather remarkable quality of vision: "20-20 hindsight."

It was only fitting, then, that the climax of Secretary Acheson's testimony should have involved a final display of Republican hindsight. It came when Mr. Acheson read the last paragraph of a secret telegram signed in December, 1945, by General MacArthur, General Wedemeyer and Admiral Spruance. The telegram said: "It is suggested that the US assistance to China, as outlined above, be made available as basis for negotiation by the American Ambassador to bring together and effect a compromise between the major opposing groups in order to promote a united, democratic China." Now this, of course, was exactly what General Marshall endeavored to do in China shortly thereafter, in an effort to drain off the Communist threat by allowing Mao Tse-tung's group to function as a minority political party, as the Communists function in, for example, France. This course of action was the political solution the Nationalists themselves sought.

After this telegram was introduced into the record, General MacArthur promptly replied, saying that he had never supported the idea of a "political coalition" of these diametrically opposed forces in China and, he said, for anyone to draw the inference from his telegram that he did support such a plan was "almost beyond belief." But the General did not deny having sent the telegram. And the words were there. He then went on to berate General Marshall, saying that the Marshall mission to China was "one of the greatest blunders in American diplomatic history." It is clear from all this and from another document produced by Mr. Acheson that General MacArthur was informed of what General Marshall was trying to do in China in 1946 and it is also clear that today the effect of General MacArthur's present statements tends to create the impression that he felt very strongly in 1946 that we were making a mistake in China. Why, then, one can justifiably ask, did General MacArthur keep silent at that time? Why did he not make his views known to a veterans' convention or to Congressman Martin? Why did he sit by and let China fall without bringing his protest to bear on the "chancelleries" of the world? Is he not the man whom the Republicans maintain knew more about what was going on in the Far East than any other American official? One can only conclude that the General, too, is trying to get by now on his powers of 20-20 hindsight.

Certainly the Administration's record in China has not been a success in mastering the revolutionary situation there—assuming that that situation could have been mastered by us at all, which is quite an assumption —and certainly the Republicans perform a most valuable service when they do what they can to challenge that record legitimately. But what they are also trying to do today—which is, to establish an implied claim to superior wisdom and foresight regarding Far Eastern policy—is, on the solid basis of the record, a political fraud.

What Secretary Acheson has done is to introduce the facts of an extremely complex policy and these facts show plainly that our military leaders and the Republican opposition concurred in the actions the Administration took in the Far East. The Republicans can honestly do nothing else, as far as the past is concerned, but take their share of the responsibility. And as far as the future is concerned—which is, to be sure, what matters most now—the Republicans will have ample opportunity, in or out of power, to display more than hindsight. Our country will surely need all the wise foresight it can get.

• NEXT WEEK •

DONALD ATTWATER writes about Hilaire Belloc and the new anthology of his prose and verse brought out just before Belloc's eighty-first birthday.

"We read them all, because we liked reading what he wrote. . . . As time went by and Belloc turned out book after book, all of different kinds, some of us became more discriminating, and even critical: we realized that he dealt with some things more happily than others. But we could always go back to *Hills and the Sea* and *The Four Men* and *The Cruise of the Nona.*"

The Nature of the Danger

IT IS reassuring that intense concern for the preservation of civil liberties was expressed by Chief Justice Vinson, and in the concurring and dissenting opinions of Supreme Court Justices Frankfurter, Jackson, Black and Douglas, in upholding the conviction of the eleven American Communists. For one of the most heinous aspects of the totalitarian evil is that to combat it, its adversaries are tempted to descend to its own level. No one can seriously question the right and duty of a democratic State to defend itself and to protect the lives and liberties of its citizens. It is only that at times it is not always easy to come by means that are both appropriate and effective.

In this instance there can be little doubt as to the character and intent of the men on trial. The question of the validity of the evidence which convicted them in the lower courts did not even arise in the Supreme Court findings. At issue was not whether they were guilty but of what they were guilty. Or more precisely whether the subversive activity

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of which they had been accused and convicted, whether their demonstrated advocacy of the overthrow of our form of government, called for their incarceration and punishment.

There are disturbing aspects about the decision. Much is at stake here, and yet the basis for the decision is not clear-cut. In the end the argument which Chief Justice Vinson takes such pains to develop leaves something to be desired; it produces the disquieting feeling that here is rationalization rather than reasoning at work.

Mr. Vinson maintains that advocacy of the overthrow of the American Government, with the intention of bringing this to pass "as speedily as circumstances permit" constitutes a "clear and present danger." He maintains that it is impossible to measure the probability or immediacy of the success of this conspiracy; that an attempt to overthrow the government, even if doomed to failure, would result in so much physical and political damage that Congress has every right to prevent it. Justice Vinson's assertion that the State is under no compulsion to wait until a putsch is in readiness seems to imply an eventuality that is anything but likely under foreseeable circumstances.

Such doubts are reinforced by Justice Jackson's concurring opinion, wherein he describes the nature and tactics of the Communist Party. He speaks of their prudence, their aversion to measures that are premature and his conviction that a government cannot be overthrown today until it is ready to fall of its own weight. He cites the taking over of Czechoslovakia as a model of Communist coups (hardly a situation that is analogous with our own). Mr. Jackson is highly dubious about the applicability of the "clear and present danger" principle and thinks that the eleven leaders could better have been prosecuted for conspiracy.

While Justice Frankfurter also concurs in the decision, he bridles at the applicability of the "clear and present danger" yardstick. He expresses great anxiety lest the nation's rightful concern for security cause her to jeopardize our long-cherished rights of free speech. He wonders what risks will henceforth be incurred by loyal citizens who advocate certain social reforms which the Communists themselves have advocated. Similar considerations are reflected in the dissenting opinions of Justice Douglas and Justice Black.

Yet, if the advocacy of the overthrow of the American Government does not *per se* constitute a "clear and present danger" under present conditions, the activities of the Communist Party do. By its organization, discipline and direction it is able to place enemy agents in all sorts of key positions—in transportation and communication, defense plants and heavy industry, school and college faculties, all sorts of government agencies. It is able to support and inspire fellow-travelers whose published writings and reviews confuse the American public at those stages in the cold war when that public should be clear-eyed and firm in its views. The Communist Party forms the nucleus for a vast spy ring which keeps the Soviet Union informed about our military secrets. And if war should break out. . . .

Perhaps the constant advocacy of Marxist doctrines in our disillusioned and secularist society does constitute a very real danger of some sort. A dynamic force inevitably expands when confronted by a vacuum. But one cannot help wishing that the Supreme Court's decision in this historic case had more support in logic and in precedent. For the urgent threat to American security resides not so much in the revolutionary doctrines of the Communist Party here as in the apparatus and links with Moscow it has built up.

Iran: Next Stage

IN THE past few weeks the nationalization of the oil industry in Iran has come closer to realization. The three men appointed by the Teheran Government have taken over the Anglo-Iranian facilities at Abadan, the big refinery; they have notified the workers that the utmost loyalty is expected of them now that they are working for Iran.

It appears that the only real starting point for any negotiations acceptable to Iran is nationalization. Iran's Premier has also informed Mr. Truman that his country will no longer tolerate the interference of the oil company in his nation's affairs.

Further indication of the vehemence of Iranian feeling on the oil question was supplied by Dr. Fereydorm Adamiyat, Delegate to the UN, who in a radio broadcast charged the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company with having taken an exhorbitant cut of the proceeds from Iranian oil. He claims that the Iranian Government received but one million pounds in royalties in 1948, while that same year the British Government took twenty-eight million pounds in taxes and the oil company's profits were sixty-two millions. As Dr. Adamiyat presented it, the issue was not only one of national pride but also one of needing the sizable oil revenues to raise the living standards of his people.

Britain faces a fateful choice. If she refuses to relent on the basis of contractual and property rights, her only hope would seem to be to prevail upon the Shah to dismiss Dr. Mossadegh and appoint a more conciliatory government. This would constitute the greatest of all gambles. National passions have been aroused, the government's hold on the masses is precarious and the attempt might give the one strong party, the Communist Tudeh, the long-sought chance to seize power. Such an attempt would lead to rioting and disorder—and if paratroops are flown in to protect British nationals—possibly to direct Soviet intervention from the North.

With all that is at stake in the Middle East, negotiation on the basis of nationalization would seem to be the only course. An agreement is feasible that would assure Britain and Western Europe of its chief source of oil—and a new arrangement could be reached which would be more equitable for all concerned. The British surely have been around long enough to realize that Iran's feeble condition is her strongest bargaining point.

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Mysterious East

NO MATTER where you grew up there was almost always a Chinese laundry nearby. If conversation turned to the teeming masses of Asia you could always think of the little men who padded around their musty shops from early in the morning until long after business everywhere else had shut down for the day. (On the West Coast, of course, the Japanese were ubiquitous, and there it must have been an altogether different story.) They were quiet and aloof, these Chinese laundrymen, and they seemed to be absolutely tireless. All work and no play, as far as anyone could see.

People said that they were used to working all the time; after all it was a lot less wearing to bend over a hot iron than to pull a rickshaw. There was also a general belief that they all went back to China with their savings, where they were henceforth ranked among the rich, what with their American dollars.

These were the only Asiatics an American growing up knew by name — the Chinese laundrymen — unless he lived on the West Coast, or frequented chop suey joints. There was even a joke about the Chinese in China all taking in each other's wash; I can't remember how it went.

Unless you lived in a very special sort of neighborhood, you grew up without knowing any Indians, Koreans, Viet-Namese or (except on the West Coast) Japanese the way you knew Poles, Germans, Irish, French, Greeks, Italians. Very few Americans ever met personally an Oriental teacher, physician, priest, carpenter, salesman, hotel clerk. The laundryman or the chop-suey restaurateur had to stand as symbol for millions.

In the movies Warner Oland played Fu Manchu; later Peter Lorre was Mr. Moto, and there was the sad story of Madame Butterfly, but she was played by Grace Moore or some other Occidental singer. Until Madame Chiang became a headline figure, there weren't any Oriental women known by name.

Then there was that grinning cartoon character in the comic strip: "Confucius say 'Pessimist fellow call glass half empty. Optimist fellow call it half full.'" But though the accent might have been Chinese, the wisdom was strictly Rotarian. The toothy little guy in the funny papers didn't help much. What Confucius really said, or what Confucianism really taught, or any other meaningful thing about the Orient was wrapped in the darkest mystery for us. Even if a student majored in History, he could get through high school and college without ever taking a course on the Orient. And how many knew where Seoul was until last year?

I don't know how it was with people who had no connection with the foreign mission program in the Orient. But we were made mission-conscious from the earliest grades, and that at least was some relationship with the distant Orient. Without the mission interest, there would have been none.

In grade school the classes vied with one another in filling the mite boxes, and if the class bought a baby, the kids had the choice of its baptismal name. (I wonder what happened to all those Peters and Josephs, but especially the Thérèses and Mary Colettes—they mostly threw away the girls, we were told—who were "rescued" with the pennies of American school children. Will that innocent charity weigh heavy on the scales?)

Naming a baby was rather fun. Whatever glimmering notion we got of China, this matter of abandoned babies played a large part. The whole idea of scuttling infants was so contrary to our way. But it wasn't really very shocking. Nothing about Asia would have seemed particularly surprising. When we talked about the missionaries it was as if they were people who had not so much gone across the world as actually left the world, to enter into some strange territory cut off from ordinary human experience. A letter from a missionary was like a letter from the dead.

An American kid growing up heard of other far-off places. There was usually a granny around with stories of the old country, and if you were Irish you heard about the banshees and the gleaming lakes and the lordly priests with the blackthorns; if you had a buddy, maybe he would be Italian and that way you'd hear about the processions in Sicily and the glory of Rome and you'd get used to the smell of ripe cheese. If one year you went around with an Italian and the next year a Pole and the next year a Russian Jew (it was quite possible in the United States) then you'd hear a lot of different stories, and the countries you didn't hear about first-hand would sooner or later be 'glorified' at your local movie house. But rarely, if ever, was there a Chinese granny around to tell about the Orient; the movies were only interested in Americans tracking down smugglers in Shanghai or Hong-Kong; the Chinese were incidental figures in these pictures, bowing wordlessly in and out of rooms.

Knowledge of the Orient was vague and fragmentary; there was plenty of myth, superstition, dubious generality. You'd hear people say that the Bible taught the yellow races would one day rule the earth, and if you talked to the boys on the corner long enough, you might hear even stranger things.

Of course, Pearl Buck wrote her novels and they dispelled some of the ignorance—at least we began to think of the Chinese as people who lived and loved, got married (several wives!) and had children. That was an improvement on the Fu Manchu legend. Finally Lin Yu Tang got popular, so we began to think of them as people with a culture and a wisdom that went beyond the aphoristic. We were better prepared for Mme Chiang—silk stockings, high heels, sophisticated manner—when she burst on the American scene than we would have been, say, fifteen or twenty years earlier.

The collaboration during the war, the subsequent Occupation in Japan, the spotlight of the UN, often falling on Orientals—these things all helped. But we still have a long way to go before we can habitually think of the Orient and the problems of the Orient as being the concern of flesh-and-blood human beings, somewhat but not too different from ourselves.

JOHN COGLEY.

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The Last Hope on Earth

Christians are bound to hope; despair of the world grows as atheism gains ground.

By FRANCOIS MAURIAC

DO Christians have a temporal hope? In truth a Christian, since he is a man who believes, is also a man who hopes, and his hopes are not only for happiness in the world to come. Our hope is essentially indivisible: it is concerned with time only because it is concerned with eternity. Far from finding a contradiction between our belief in the Father Who is in Heaven and our looking forward to the coming of His Kingdom on earth, we claim that if there is a contradiction it is found among the atheists. We hold that for those who do not believe in eternal life, there is no temporal hope that can legitimately be called genuine.

Today it is becoming clear that the Nietschean cult of youth and force, which opposed the religion of the conquered and of the human offscouring marked by the Sign of the Cross, is a fraud. Who would deny today that the despair of this generation fed itself on the "God is dead" of Zarathusra, that mournful cry that was chorused and orchestrated by the young teachers to whom this generation abandoned itself?

If there is no God and therefore anything goes, what is permissible first of all is to despair. The dark luxury of a melancholy heart is to take pleasure in the intoxicating notion that the world is absurd, and so we have no reason to be less absurd than the world. Hope, like faith, hope in our life here below, is a theological virtue. A Christian is obliged to hope, just as he is under obligation to be chaste or not to hate. Despair is a luxury which is forbidden, a temptation, and we are enjoined not to yield to it. And how strange it is that especially when we are young the temptation assails us. It is when we are twenty that we shed the bitterest tears. Very often it is in the twilight of life that peace comes, an acceptance of what was, what is and what will be—a deep recognition of the meaning of the sublime words which Bernanos puts on the lips of the dying country priest: "Tout est grâce." Yes, everything is grace here below. We know it, we believe it; we even sense it sometimes in prayer and when heart speaks to heart at Communion.

If there is no God, if the world has neither direction nor final end, if coming from nothing it is going toward nothing, man, bound to the dreary machinery of a trade, or become a mere element in an organism (whether in the service of private interests, in a capitalist regime, or of a party, or the State, or of a collectivity) man remains a stranger to that which constitutes the monotonous and grim course of his days. That power in man which reasons and reflects, the heart with its attachments and sufferings, that part of him which is most himself, has no real interest in the screws he turns, the tickets he punches, the columns of figures he adds in a ledger. If Christ is not risen and if our hope is vain, every man literally becomes a prisoner; even the few privileged ones who escape the lot of being forced to work for a living may undergo a servitude that is even worse, for there are prisoners of pleasure and automatons of vice.

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I WELL know that today Communism crystallizes a great hope for a large part of mankind. Yes, without a doubt. But because Stalinist Communism is confused with materialism, this earthly hope is nourished from within, if I may say so, by a despair which confines it and hems it in on all sides. What kind of despair? The despair that is linked to the claim that spirit has no existence independent of the flesh, that spirit is only a secondary factor, a function of the brain, that the material world perceptible to the senses remains the only reality. Indeed we grant that Communism supplies the prisoners of this materialist dungeon with a meaning for their lives while they await annihilation: of all the ways which are offered the prisoner to "braid his straw," to use de Vigny's expression, the most inviting may well be to work for the coming of a Communist regime in which the rich will have to cough up and production and consumption will be regulated according to justice. Besides, while he awaits annihilation, it can prove gratifying to a man to feel that he is in step with history and belongs to a party, a power which seeks nothing less than the domination of the world. Yes, it may seem satisfying and even intoxicating

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FRANCOIS MAURIAC is a member of the French Academy. His novels, Viper's Tangle, Thérèse, and Woman of the Pharisees, have been published in this country in recent years.

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to have a part in a contest which has the planet for its arena and all of humanity for its prize! But what does it matter in the end to the individual who is called upon to disappear entirely? The Party, the activities of the Party, its struggles, its triumphs, will have helped him to live, no doubt. But his joy will be like the stereotyped joy of the boys and girls you see smiling broadly in the fields of ripe grain in the propaganda publications of all totalitarians. That is not inward joy, the only joy that counts—our joy.

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OUR generation is more aware of this kind of joy than we ourselves, we Christians, think. Sometimes I am asked whether I believe that there is a religious awakening today. Well no, not exactly an awakening, but an interest, a nostalgia. I know more than one atheist who prowls around our humble and huddled flock—a flock whose aspects are all not equally attractive when viewed from without: we have our ceremonial forms that have become mechanical, our lifeless devotions, the automatism of repetitive formulas, the inevitable administrative apparatus of the parish, the law that withers and the letter that never ceases to kill. There are these things, and yet something remains which, thanks be to God, we do not have the power to destroy: something that we bear within us, mediocre as we are, and that shines forth without our knowing it. It is the fire which the Lord came to kindle on earth and which at this moment of time it is our turn to keep alive, poorly or well; we have the fire which frightens away brutes but which draws to itself souls suffering from the cold.

The Son of Man has need of no other witnesses but us, or rather of Himself in us, so great is the contrast between us who believe in the *Pater* we recite, who believe in the Father Who is love and in the risen Son—between us who have remained faithful—and the present generation which survives the myths of which our fathers were enamored. This is a somewhat haggard generation which sets up its tents under the standard of the absurd, at the crossroads where all the ideologies of the last century have come to a dismal end. Marxism has been tried out everywhere Soviet Russia rules, and millions of slaves labor there to make men more happy; science has produced, at Hiroshima and in the laboratories for bacterial warfare, confirmation of the promise made from its beginnings: "You shall be like gods." The religion of progress and of human perfectibility is pondered at leisure by the survivors of the concentration camps, and in crowded wooden barracks by displaced persons who have left the bodies of their children under the ruins of their gutted cities, as well as by the martyrs of the opposed ideologies who peopled all the prisons of Europe and still do today. In the state of despair which has ensnared the human race, I do not see a single Socialist who has inherited the faith of a Jaurès or a single Communist who does not feel himself personally bound to the cause of Slavic imperialism. These are days when the world of the concentration camps lives on under the infamous regime which brought that world into being. Hence we begin to understand why the last hope of the human race is embodied in Christians who have remained faithful to hope, to enchantment, in the midst of this disenchanted world.

★

HOPE for here below? Yes, for here below. I have not forgotten the question which I set out to answer: "Do Christians have a temporal hope?" This was probably in the minds of those who asked: Have Christians a political hope? In making my reply I shall speak as a man for whom hope was never political, with the possible exception of a few weeks following the Liberation.

I wish to make myself clear: I believe that Christian hope has to do with time as well as with eternity; it has to do with politics but in the way that an antidote has to do with a poison. If there is one lesson which history has repeated for us *ad nauseam,* it is that Christianity reaches its worst state when Christians have political power, when they burn men at the stake or profane the tombs of Port-Royal-des-Champs. Political Christianity—that is to say, the spiritual power of the Church in the service of Caesar and the formidable arm of Caesar in the service of the Church—has been found guilty of misdeeds everywhere, particularly in the Spain and France of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and again in our own day. . . . But that is an inflammatory subject which opens wounds poorly healed. It is enough for me to point out in what sense Christian hope cannot be of a political character—which does not mean that we may evade politics, for that would be the worst sort of politics because most of the time it would involve complacency, silence, complicity without risks. Today throughout a large part of the globe every thought is watched over, twisted, directed, even where scientific research and the poetic inspiration are concerned. All of us who believe in Christ's words, whatever our political affiliations, claim to have in our keeping the earthly hope of maintaining the inviolability of human conscience in the world. This earthly hope of Christians on the political level is truly much more than a hope; it is a certainty that as long as there remains a Christian worthy of the name in this world, indeed if there is only one Chris-

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tian, he will sustain an interior life into which no policeman can force an entrance.

We Catholics of 1951 are the sons of a Church which, after having embodied in the eyes of our forebears of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the enslavement of the mind, now embodies liberty, even in the eyes of unbelievers. The Church, slandered on account of the Syllabus, has shown her true face before the world. "The truth will make you free," and we know today that this is literally true; the Nazi totalitarians knew it just as the Stalinist totalitarians now know it. Wherever there is a single Christian conscience, there will exist a secret dialogue, a silent exchange, participation in a love which Caesar cannot take by surprise and over which he can have no power. This tête-à-tête of the creature and the Creator takes place even in the dungeon and it will persist there always.

And that is why all the totalitarian techniques will always fail in forcing the gate to this last haven: the Christian conscience. To be sure, they appear to triumph when the prisoner, stricken to his very mind and soul, seems to be only a stupefied and broken creature before his judges. Yes, but even then, a Cardinal Mindzenty, despite his tormentors and perhaps without knowing it, *triumphs in his defeat*, because he raises above the world the living image of his crucified Lord.

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THAT we have the right to a temporal hope, I am convinced. And so in the age in which I live, having seen what I have seen, it is a mystery to me that ardent Christians can look for nothing else but the second coming of the Lord. They seem to concern themselves with nothing but preparing for His return, even if it is to take place thousands of years hence, so as to reply in advance to the anguished question which the Savior Himself once asked: "When the Son of Man returns, will He still find faith upon the earth?" Which recalls the question: "Will He still find hope?" For despair is gaining ground to the same extent that atheism gains, and the world that it has uncovered is a world that has become absurd in the eyes of the man without God.

Naturally we have our political preferences. I have been nourished on them myself all my life. I could take for my own the words of Lacordaire who said that he wished to die a penitent Christian and an impenitent liberal. Political preferences, yes, but not a political hope—preferences that we must control, watch over, bridle. I should like young men to think this over, whether they be inclined toward the positivism of the extreme Right or whether they experience the attraction of Marxism: to belong to a party of the extreme Left or Right means to receive orders, to obey commands. With any party, you risk embracing falsehoods and hatred—hatred above all.

Remember that an apostle, priest or lay, if he really lives his faith, better serves the political ideas toward which he is inclined than any partisan. Truly the entire politics of the very exemplary Church of France today consists in digging canals by means of which grace can circulate everywhere, even to the most inaccessible places, to reach souls there, to seek and to save that which was lost.

In politics, you see, I fear that we shall always be dupes to the very extent that we remain Christians. Doubtless Christians have to expose themselves to these deceits and must thwart them. Indeed far be it from me to deny those of our brothers whose vocation is a political one and who represent us in parliament and in the councils of state; there are some of them of whom we are proud. They are not the ones I am thinking of when I say that, despite notable exceptions, politics is degrading.

Moreover, there is an essential contradiction between political life, which is all directed toward the world without, and Christian life, which is all directed toward that which is within. In so far as he lives for his brothers and with his brothers, sharing their anxieties even to the point of submitting himself to the same tasks, the Christian priest or layman assuredly seeks and finds the Kingdom of God only within himself. I imagine (and I beg your indulgence for daring to speak of these things) that this must be communion with God through meditation, through prayer, through sacramental life, that this must be the life of grace which nourishes and makes fruitful a man's apostolate among men. I imagine that it is this source, deeply buried and hidden, which, with his God, he alone is to know. It is of paramount importance for a man to guard this source most jealously.

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FOR me the temporal hope of the Christian, his hope for here below (and I know no other) is not to lose, if he possesses it, or to recover, if he has had the misfortune of losing it, the foretaste of his eternal hope: that calm within himself, that peace which the world cannot give but which the world soon seeks to take away. And in the midst of the worst catastrophes of history, and despite all the stains of a poor life, it is this interior silence through which at times resounds the word which reassures us and which, through us, reassures the whole human race. . . . Do you remember Our Lord's words when He walked on the stormy sea and cried from afar to the poor men trembling in the boat? "It is I. Fear not."

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The Message of Dean Manion

THERE WAS this letter from a priest-teacher. It said: "Tonight I am reading *The Key to Peace* by Manion. It is burning me to a crisp. . . . What irks me more is that every senior in all [the local] high schools, public and Catholic, is being presented with a copy by the American Legion. We are turning the clock back about 25 years. Pius XI must be turning and twisting in his grave."

These were alarming words. I got hold of a copy of the book and was immediately struck by the opinions expressed on the jacket, so different from that of my friend. Said Dr. Norman Vincent Peale: "one of the greatest books of all my reading experience." Said the president of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons: "must be studied in all the homes and schools of America." Said a past national commander of the American Legion: "finest treatise on Americanism ever brought to my attention." Said Father Edward A. Keller, C.S.C., director of the Bureau of Economic Research of the University of Notre Dame: "This is not just another book. It will become, I think, an American classic."

Could my friend be right? Was not Clarence Manion himself the Dean of the College of Law at Notre Dame? Was not Notre Dame one of the greatest Catholic universities in America?

Surely my friend must be wrong. I opened the book and read. "The [American] Revolution," wrote Dean Manion, "had brought forth and moved into action on this continent, and for the first time in human history, a genuine cure for the social cancer of class-consciousness and group antagonism." Hmm. Here was food for thought. Apparently the Popes had been wrong when they said, in the words of Leo XIII, "if human society is to be healed, only a return to Christian life and institutions will heal it." Or else Dean Manion must mean that Christianity had never been "moved into action" until the American Revolution. In either case this was a strikingly new and original thought.

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I READ further. On page 20 I discovered that America has "the greatest civilization that the world has ever seen." On page 24 I learned about the illegitimate birth of the working class. The French Revolution, under its "Socialistic leaders," "generated a centrifugal force which tore apart and disintegrated the individual human personality, the natural hub of all social order, and flung its fragments out to the rim where the broken pieces were congealed in the form of social and economic 'classes.' Thereafter the European 'citizen' ceased to be a man and became instead a part of the 'proletariat,' the 'aristocracy' or the 'bourgeoisie.'"

Once again a striking intellectual concept, this time expressed in prose which could only be compared with the first written account of atomic fission. And once again a concept strangely at variance with the thinking of the Popes. The very title of Leo XIII's encyclical, *On the Condition of the Workers,* must strike Dean Manion as a kind of sacrilege.

This is what Pius XI says in *Quadragesimo Anno,* describing his predecessor's statement: "The Supreme Pastor in this Letter, grieving that so large a portion of mankind should 'live undeservedly in miserable and wretched conditions,' took it upon himself with great courage to defend 'the cause of the workers whom the present age had handed over, each alone and defenseless, to the inhumanity of employers and the unbridled greed of competitors.'"

Pius XI, benighted man, nowhere mentions the leaders of the French Revolution, Socialistic or otherwise, in describing the evolution of "that class which on account of the modern expansion of industry had increased to enormous numbers, but had not yet obtained its rightful place or rank in society and was, for that reason, all but neglected and despised—the workers, we mean—to whose improvement, to the great advantage of souls, the diocesan and regular clergy, though burdened with other pastoral duties, have, under the leadership of the bishops, devoted themselves." (*Q.A.*)

Dean Manion does not deny that, even in America, some imperfections have existed in our social order. But this is not a matter with which the state should ever concern itself. "The ultimate good of all humanity," he says, "can be accomplished only by the advancement of virtue in individual persons." And he concludes from that: "we must consequently develop the general good not from 'Statute to Statute' but from 'person to person' . . . we can never produce any kind of justice on a legislative assembly line."

This may strike you as a remarkably anarchistic statement to be coming from the dean of a college of law. But do not think that Dean Manion is callous to the sufferings of the under-privileged. It is the good of their souls he is thinking of, or at least the souls of their employers. "Any shrinkage in the area of personal responsibility" he writes, "tends to frustrate the purpose for which man was created. Man is here to be tested for his free compliance with the moral law of God."

★

THE LOGIC of it is unanswerable. If the government is going to stop our employers from working children 12 hours a day at 20c an hour, how is an employer ever going to prove that he is too good a Christian to do such a thing? If there is no temptation, there can be no virtue. *Touché,* Dean Manion.

To turn from a daring social concept like this to the pedestrian pages of the Popes' encyclicals is like stepping out of a stunt flier's plane into an ox-cart. For this is

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what Pius XI says in *Q.A.*, quoting and summarizing Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum*:

"With regard to civil authority Leo XIII, boldly, breaking through the confines imposed by Liberalism [for Liberalism read Manionism] fearlessly taught that government must not be thought a mere guardian of law and of good order, but rather must put forth every effort so that 'through the entire scheme of laws and institutions . . . both public and individual well-being may develop spontaneously out of the very structure and administration of the State.' Just freedom of action must, of course, be left both to individual citizens and to families, yet only on condition that the common good be preserved and wrong to any individual be abolished. The function of the rulers of the State, moreover, is to watch over the community and its parts; but in protecting private individuals in their rights, chief consideration ought to be given to the weak and the poor. 'For the nation, as it were, of the rich is guarded by its own defenses and is in less need of governmental protection, whereas the suffering multitude, without the means to protect itself, relies especially on the protection of the State. Wherefore, since wage-workers are numbered among the great mass of the needy, the State must include them under its special care and foresight.' "

I apologize for the long quotations from the Popes, but it is my contention that even educated Catholics do not read them, or having read do not remember—a contention which Dean Manion has served brilliantly to confirm.

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I WILL quote no more from the encyclicals, but I cannot resist a few more selections from *The Key To Peace*. "It follows therefore," he says on page 66, "that each responsible human being has both a natural right and a *natural duty* [italics added] to acquire and hold private property." And again, several pages later, he refers with religious awe to "the eagerness of each man and all men to own and control material things." "This natural and necessary 'eagerness' in each individual," he adds, "is sometimes referred to as 'The Profit Motive.' "

Do you suppose that the first Christians, or all the hosts of Benedictines, Franciscans, Dominicans and a hundred other orders down to our own day, knew what they were doing? Surely they could not. Father, forgive them. . . . They did not realize that they were violating "the natural duty to acquire and hold private property." They did not know that they were trampling underfoot the sacred "eagerness of each man and all men to own and control material things."

But if such passages give you pause, at least you cannot deny that the intensity of Dean Manion's love for America and things American would be hard to equal. This is how he speaks of Americanism and of those other unfortunates who are not American: "The basis of this formula [Americanism] is the indestructible God-given human personality which is the one thing that every American definitely and officially holds in common with each human being on Earth. It is unfortunate that this is also the one thing that every political system in the Un-American world officially and categorically denies . . . from the autocratic kings to the conscienceless commissars, European political science has always held consistently to the proposition that government, once installed, *is unlimited in its power over its subjects*" (italics the author's).

One wonders if the dean of Notre Dame's College of Law has ever heard of such European political scientists as St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Robert Cardinal Bellarmine, or Francisco Suarez, or Bishop Bossuet or Archbishop Fénelon, not to mention Jean Bodin, Jacques Maritain, and a hundred other less celebrated laymen who have taught across the centuries that government is and must be limited in its power over its subjects.

Dean Manion is filled with scorn for the past centuries of European history, but the fullness of his contempt for its present knows neither limit nor modifier. "The disappearance of Hitler has brought no observable change in European political ideals. Since the end of the war, England has moved *officially* into the orbit of the all-powerful States, while on the European Continent, both East and West of the 'Iron Curtain,' the 'nothingness and insignificance of the human being' is everything that Adolph Hitler could have wished for."

So much for the governments of France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the rest. It seems a shame that the Catholics of Western Europe, including Pius XII, should waste so much time and energy worrying about keeping the Communists out of power. They would do better to read *The Key to Peace* and relax.

Only America remains as a last citadel of freedom, justice, honor and decency. And even here we are threatened with "socialistic regimentation by a government that has shaken loose from its constitutional limitations." Dean Manion does not quite say so, but he makes it clear that unless the Republicans come to save us soon, America too will slide down the irretraceable chute into a corrupt and tyrannical "Europeanism."

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SO THERE you are. I am afraid that in discussing this book I have been guilty of what one reader of THE COMMONWEAL calls "sarcasm and innuendo." But what can you do? Can you come right out and say that Dean Manion has written a foolish and dangerous book? Can you come right out and say that the University of Notre Dame should be concerned that such a thinker is the head of its law school?

The Key to Peace is misnamed. It should be called *The Key to Paranoia*. One final quotation, from Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary*: "Paranoia . . . a chronic mental disorder characterized by systematized delusions of persecution and of one's own greatness, sometimes with hallucinations." Dean Manion's concept of Americanism, complete with hallucinations, fits this definition like a glove.

JOHN C. CORT.

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The Stage

REVIVALS

APPROXIMATELY one-third of the plays produced during this past season were classified as 'revivals,' and the fact that some twenty out of sixty shows offered were the work of dead men, rather than of bright young hopefuls, has occasioned a fair amount of lamentation in the trade. The general thesis runs that our younger playwrights are being starved out by the cautious reproduction of proved successes, and that so large a proportion of 'revivals' indicates and helps to perpetuate the creative sterility of our time. It seems to me that neither of these somewhat inconsistent attitudes is well taken, and that the production figures are themselves misleading.

In the first place, the lion's share of revivals were brought in by non-profit organizations—ANTA (American National Theatre and Academy) and City Center—and cannot be taken as proof of timidity on the part of the regular commercial managers. In the second place, the commercial managers—as they well know—are not protected by the age or reputation of such older plays as they choose to produce, and most such ventures this season have been failures. In the third place, it is extremely difficult to locate those promising unproduced plays we keep hearing about, as the quality of such new plays as *do* get produced clearly testifies. And in the fourth place, the term 'revival,' as applied to such plays as "King Lear," and "Richard II," "The Taming of the Shrew," and "Romeo and Juliet," seems to me something of a misnomer.

To take this last point first, the practice of lumping "Lear" together with "Springtime for Henry" as an indication of the same general theatrical practice, with presumably the same general theatrical value, is an obvious distortion of evidence. If one of these may legitimately be called a 'revival'—something resurrected from the dead—the other may not, and it may be that we require another term—'standard,' perhaps, or, if you like it fancy, 'perennial'—to distinguish the acknowledged classic of permanent value from the pot-boiling period-piece which sees revival only at the hands of an interested star or sentimental manager. In most countries the so-called classics *are* treated as 'standards' and maintained in more or less permanent repertory; the notion that their survival somehow curtails or cuts into the work of younger men would be found as absurd there as it is gradually gaining credence here. It is, of course, our failure to establish a theatrical tradition, and our lack of permanent organizations, which throws the burden of maintaining the classics onto the one-shot managers, but it strikes me that we ought to be thanking them for performing the service, and perhaps congratulating them on their courage, rather than attacking them for a supposed disservice to their contemporaries. It *is* a service which they perform: the maintenance of the 'great' plays is good for the theatre at large—it keeps faith alive, for one thing—and for the young playwright, too. The writer who grows up with some practical experience of the whole range of theatre is less likely to fall into the more superficial enthusiasms of his own age. He may also be given a sense of belonging to something, a sense which is hard to acquire in the catch-as-catch-can American theatre. He will not, in any event, be shouldered out of the market by Shakespeare; the fact is that Garrick liked to play Richard III and Benedick did not keep Goldsmith and Sheridan from writing their plays or eighteenth-century managers from producing them. Generally speaking, a strong sense of theatrical continuity helps invigorate creative activity; there is an optimum in this, of course, but the absence of any tradition may be as dispiriting as too much of one.

If, instead of equating "Romeo and Juliet" with "The Green Bay Tree," we drop the 'standards' from the list, the number of revivals is not so impressive. And when we recall that this season's "The Royal Family," "Twentieth Century," "Idiot's Delight," and a number of others originated from non-commercial sources, the possible case against the regular managers disappears almost entirely.

There remains the argument that the non-profit theatres themselves are devoting insufficient time to the new playwright, but even this likely-sounding charge does not hold up too well under investigation. City Center, for instance, is on a two-week rehearsal basis, presents extraordinary problems in stage design and auditorium acoustics, and requires a play which is firmly 'set' if it is to be got on the boards at all; supposing that the City Center management could be badgered into experimenting with an untried script, the young playwright who would entrust his manuscript and possibly his future to production under these conditions is the kind of young playwright who has not yet learned the wisdom of taking a play out of town.

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ANTA is another matter. Here the productions are adequately rehearsed and mounted—miraculously so, considering the number of productions offered this past season—and the theatrical results may be said to constitute a fair test of a script. ANTA has been roundly berated in some quarters for its current season, and the fact of the matter is that only one out of its ten offerings was entirely satisfactory. But ANTA is not suffering so much from a lack of adventurousness—having produced Jeffers, Lorca, Wilson, and brought Jouvet to this country in a single season—as from the very dearth of those good untried scripts which are supposed to be lying around. ANTA is, in a sense, in a doubly difficult position: it is plagued not only by the 'revival' charge but by another popular superstition which holds that there are many good off-beat plays available which the commercial managers will not touch. The truth is that the regular managers are so courageous as to produce everything from "Burning Bright" to "Let's Make an Opera," and ANTA is left with an assortment of 'seconds' which can never be very appetizing. Actually, ANTA did come up

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with at least four 'originals' of the kind it is expected to do—"The Cellar and the Well," "The Little Blue Light," "The Tower Beyond Tragedy," and "The House of Bernarda Alba," a list which does not take into account the fact that the rendering of "Peer Gynt" was a new one by Paul Green. If the regular managers did not do these plays, it was not so much out of timidity as plain good judgment, and ANTA will be faced eternally with the fact that there is no such thing as a *good* 'non-commercial' script. ANTA's future, it seems to me, will be bound up more and more—in the manner of other national theatres—with 'standards,' or, if you please, 'revivals,' and I cannot really think there will be any harm done.

WALTER KERR.

The Screen

ANGLO SCREWBALL

IF YOU can imagine a British version of American family wackiness of the You-Can't-Take-It-With-You school, you can pretty well visualize *"Tony Draws a Horse,"* an import from England that kids many an established institution. In handling the Brook Williams' script (based on a comedy by Lesley Storm), Director John Paddy Carstairs lets his enthusiasm run away with him at times and the spoofing gets rather slapstick, but on the whole "Tony" is good fun. Be sure, however, that you like the zany characters often depicted in American films by Billie Burke and Spring Byington. The English have their counterpart—and in this comedy, they range from young Tony right through several generations to his great-grandfather.

Little Tony, whose uninhibited drawings on walls start all the excitement, has been the object of contention between his parents for years. His father, a Harley Street physician, favors a firm hand and is willing to administer it; his mother, a psychiatrist, wants Tony to have a mind of his own and the will to use it. Tony's mind seems to run to drawings with rather explicit anatomical details for so young a boy. But mother says it's not Tony's mind that needs cleaning up; it's yours. Father thinks Tony just needs a good spanking. In fact, mother and father come to the parting of ways over Tony—and mother goes home to her parents, who are much funnier. This leads to the craziest complications, because the psychiatrist is very pretty (though furious with her husband) and somehow she and the man her sister is about to marry wander off to Dieppe, of all places. In the meantime her father lands in jail and her husband comes arunning because Tony has been kicked out of school. The cast, who impolitely razz all forms of stuffiness, are excellent and include Cecil Parker, Anne Crawford, Mervyn Johns, Edward Rigby and many others. My favorite among this worthy group is Barbara Everest, who puts over her malaprops to perfection. Her haughty indignation when her husband takes up with a Russian agitator is wonderful to see and hear: "Somebody's studying the Karl Marx brothers' doctrine!"

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THERE are also several solemn items on this week's docket. *"Night Into Morning"* gets very serious indeed as we see Ray Milland struggle with the verities. One morning while he is teaching English at a California university, his wife and son are killed in an explosion. Ray tries so hard to be brave about the tragedy that he forgets to be human. Fortunately he has several good friends (thoughtfully played by Nancy Davis and John Hodiak) who stick by him when he's well on the way to becoming a drunk. In spite of the fact that the movie flounders with superficiality at times, Director Fletcher Markle puts over its thesis well. One can hardly call *"Night Into Morning"* entertainment, but it is well acted; and its point ("He who is alone chooses to be alone") gives audiences something to think about after the finale.

★

THE outline of an unsolved murder mystery that actually took place in the movie capital is the basis for the plot of *"Hollywood Story."* A producer (Richard Conte) goes to Hollywood to make a film on his own. His screenplay stems from this unsolved crime, and in working on the picture, Conte runs into more clues than the police encountered back in 1929, when one of the industry's leading directors was shot. The clues are exposed to us one by one until we have quite a collection of dope to unravel. The script that handles all this has been well written, and your interest won't lag. Along with Mr. Conte in the cast are Julia Adams, Henry Hull, Fred Clark and several others. Old timers will be pleased to see Francis X. Bushman, Betty Blythe and William Franklin, among the stars who lend a bygone Hollywood atmosphere to the piece.

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THERE are some unusually good atmosphere shots in *"Three Steps North,"* an American movie filmed in Italy. Its story concerns an ex-GI who returns to that country to dig up four million lire he made on black market operations and buried there. As the plot becomes too involved, the audience is put in the confused position of not being sure with whom sympathies should run. Lloyd Bridges plays the American with proper touches of brazen toughness; Lea Padavani is quite fetching as his love interest; and Aldo Fabrizi is warmly sentimental as the caretaker of the cemetery for American dead, beside which the loot is buried. The melodrama gets out of hand, but the scenery might be worth your investigation.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Of Note

Freud and Religion

RUDOLF ALLERS contributes an essay on Psychoanalysis and Religion to the current issue of the *Journal of Arts and Letters* (555 South Hamline, St. Paul 5, Minn.). The following is a key excerpt.

> The attitude of the average psychoanalyst is to view everything which does not fit into his preconceived world as a "symptom." That someone should be concerned with his fate in eternity, or that he think of eternity at all, that he trust or fear God, that he feel obligated to conform to the commands of his religion, all this is "symptomatic."
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> Freud's theories have achieved an enormous influence. There is hardly any area of human life and activity that has not been penetrated by psychoanalytic notions. This penetration is particularly evident in the fields of literary criticism, sociology, and education. One reason for this amazingly general acceptance of psychoanalytic views has been indicated above. Psychoanalysis claims to be "scientific." But it is that only insofar as it claims to apply the principles of science to the study of human affairs. However, this claim is in accord with a widely diffused tendency; many people believe that the procedures of science are the only ones by which reliable knowledge can be attained. They never conceive of the possibility that there may be aspects of reality which do not lend themselves to this approach, and where the results of such methods must be erroneous. One cannot reproach the psychoanalysts for harboring the same idea; in this, too, they are children of their age.
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> But one can hold them responsible for consistently disregarding all objections. Freud never answered any criticism, nor do his pupils. They have a very easy way out of such difficulties. Since they are convinced of the absolute truth of their doctrine, criticism or rejection must be explained in terms of this doctrine. If the critic had been analyzed, so they argue, he would realize the truth of the Freudian teaching; if he refuses to recognize the doctrine, it is because his views are determined by some unconscious factors which analysis would bring to the fore. This is, in fact, an attitude which has no parallel in the history of human thought. Neither will one easily find another example of such disregard for factual evidence as is common among the psychoanalysts.
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> This is true also in their way of dealing with questions of religion. They have, of course, to recognize the fact that religion plays a great role in the lives of many people, who, for the rest, cannot be considered as neurotic or abnormal in any sense. Some psychoanalysts are willing to admit that religion may possess a definite value for men. But if they admit this, they make at the same time certain restrictions. The beliefs men cherish should be such that the psychoanalyst can approve of them.
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> Now, the psychoanalyst is essentially a positivist. Only that is true which can be observed and verified. If he concedes the relevance of religious beliefs, he can do so only from a pragmatic viewpoint. Religion may be all right inasmuch as it proves helpful to the individual in carving out for himself a place in reality, finding satisfaction, and achieving "adjustment." . . . Psychoanalysis is, in fact, fundamentally a system which does not recognize anything above man. . . .
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> Freud's doctrine had to be anti-religious and atheistic. It had to explain religion in the terms of its fundamental assumptions, just as it had to deal in the same manner with many other aspects of human existence.
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> In face of the almost general recognition of psychoanalysis, one is confronted with the question of what attitude to assume in regard to this doctrine. We are concerned here with the problem whether or not psychoanalysis is as such a tenable theory, though it can be shown that it is not, because it rests on arbitrary and unproven suppositions and is in open conflict with ascertainable facts. That this is the case obviously renders easy the answer whether psychoanalysis ought to be considered as a scientific achievement. It is not and cannot be regarded as such.
>
> Some, however, believe that certain propositions of psychoanalysis can be disengaged from the context in which they appear in Freud's doctrine. These people believe especially that one can detach Freud's method from his basic conceptions. This, too, is a standpoint as dangerous as it is untenable, for practice and theory are intimately connected with each other. The method presupposes the theory. The method, indeed, consists to a considerable extent in interpretation, and this interpretation must be made in terms of the theory. Freud's doctrine is not one on psychology and, besides this, or above it, also a philosophy. It is a complete and indissoluble synthesis of both of these constituents. To accept parts of Freud's system is logically impossible. If anything, Freud was a consistent thinker; his work is truly a system in which every part is related to and dependent on the whole. To accept certain segments and to reject others can be done only if one either misunderstands Freud or the ideas with which the psychoanalytic theory conflicts.
>
> Psychoanalysis cannot but be atheistic. It must be that because it is rooted in a perfectly naturalistic and materialistic philosophy. It is the clearest statement of an absolutist humanism, of a view which is unwilling to recognize that there may be something higher than man.

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Wallpaper Metaphysics

By HANS SAHL

IN ONE of the most remarkable essays to have appeared recently in America, Peter Viereck re-examines the significance of Babbitt to our times. ("Babbitt Revisited," THE COMMONWEAL, September 15, 1950.) Babbitt, says Viereck, reemerges every twenty years under a new name and behind a new mask. The old Babbitt voted Republican and satisfied his artistic needs by hanging Whistler's "Mother" in the salon. The young Babbitt is more ambitious—and perhaps less sincere. He raves about "progress," Picasso and non-objective art (without understanding it) and displays an impressive familiarity with the slogans of today's "avant-garde," whereas in reality he is nothing but an "aged, rheumatic *enfant terrible* of yesterday."

What Viereck wants to imply is that ideas, at one time revolutionary, turn stale or even reverse themselves when confronted with the realities of a new age. This applies to political ideas as well as to recent attempts in American art and literature to revive the obscurantism of the European twenties by a sort of "artificial respiration." Observers of the American cultural scene admit with regret that they are alarmed by this development, especially by the new wave of abstract art which has hit these shores after a delay of more than twenty years and seems to be reviving, even on a much larger scale, what to many European artists today has proved to be a dead issue or one of passing value only.

Abstract art was once a legitimate protest against the academicism and conformism of the then prevailing schools. Painting had begun to compete with photography, and the new movement set out to liberate art from its obsession with objects, to purify the means of expression and to re-establish the autonomy of artistic creation. Today abstract art has developed into something against which it had once protested so vigorously —into a new academicism. The revolt against mechanization has itself become mechanized.

To Kandinsky the gradual dissolution of the object was a necessary step towards a more intensified, more convincing vision of his inner world. Today not a few of his disciples in America, while referring to their master's "transcendentalism," elevate the anarchy of the color box to a law of composition. They forget that, from Giotto to Holbein and Cézanne, every great work of art contained abstract elements which, when integrated into the whole, produced the significant form. What they are really attempting appears to be an effort to turn partial truths into absolute truths, for instance, by separating color from form, form from content, and to proclaim each of them self-sufficient.

Yet the impact of abstract art upon contemporary imagination, by stressing the dignity and quality of material itself, the rightful existence of color and line as such, etc., is undeniable. In America especially it has helped to revolutionize public taste in the field of mass production, to an extent that even department stores had to meet the new demands by applying abstract designs to lamp shades, carpets, ash trays, shower curtains, etc. In fact, one can say without exaggeration and even without the slightest attempt at being ironical, that this was precisely the historical function of abstract art: to have created a new style, a new way of living and decorating for our technological age.

Confusion arises only if one tries to discuss applied arts on a metaphysical level; if art dealers and their propagandists find it fitting to foist upon a young country, still insecure in artistic matters, every manifestation of the "subconscious," even in its most rudimentary stage, as *the* "Art of Today."

Rorschach tests are not the concern of the art critic but the psychiatrist. Textile designs and tapestry patterns, whose exotic beauty may even attract an art lover, should not have been measured by the aesthetic yardstick applied to a Rembrandt drawing. The result was that the amateur has become king and is trying his best to convert New York's art shows into amusement parks for the highbrows. In fact, the new Babbitts of abstract art seem to have a wonderful time dancing around their non-objective camp fires and indulging in non-objective table discussions on the merits of dripping the paint upon the canvas, rather than using the old-fashioned, "reactionary" brush. Since we are living in a "machine-age," we can reach quicker salvation by pouring out our souls with the time-saving dripping system or the automatic color gun. This, of course, is not the "American Art of Today," but it is one of its most recent and best advertised trends. Its growing influence, not only between 57th and MacDougal Street but on a nation-wide scale, indicates that we are confronted with a new movement—a movement which has already won over much larger areas than at any time in Europe. Abstract painters teach at high schools and kindergartens, and not too infrequently a painter who still works with distinguishable objects has to change to "abstract" in order to see his paintings exhibited.

★

IT must be said, however, that neither commercial speculations nor artistic misunderstandings alone can explain this new fashion. It stems from deeper causes and origins, and perhaps one should relate the new purism in art to the puritanical tradition of this country, or to the iconoclastic tendencies to be found among early Protestant sects, as well as to the fact that America is a country without the Middle Ages and therefore without the sensual experiences of centuries of Catholic religious

HANS SAHL is the New York theatre and art correspondent for the Swiss paper, Neue Zuercher Zeitung.

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art. (A Mondrian or a DeKooning would certainly befit a New England Presbyterian Church much better than, let us say, a "Christ" by Rouault). In any case, the edict, "Thou shall create no image" has seldom been taken more literally than by followers of an art school to whom even the object constitutes an obstacle to their reunion with God (or themselves).

Apart from this puritanical element, so inherent in abstract painting, the widely promoted tendency to "democratize" art in this country may also have contributed to its success. The fact that abstract art can easily be taught and learned seems to encourage the defenders of our popular culture, who wish to see art deprived of its esoteric inaccessibility and to make it a "hobby." (Everybody his own Mondrian). Future historians will excel in exploring the various and often contradictory elements out of which emerged what is known today as "Non-objective Art in America"—that strange synthetic mixture combining true values with faked ones, ascetic devotion to art with hostile contempt for it, utmost sincerity with utmost commercialism, "art for art's sake" with the spirit of the advertising agencies, the monklike introversion of Kandinsky with the latest window displays on Fifth Avenue. . . .

There is tragedy in all this—the tragedy of a movement that, four decades ago, started out to be more radical in spirit and more refined in art than any other previous movement but now finds itself caught in the trap of its own theoretical short-comings. For the fact remains that art without object has missed its objectives. It may have its due place in the artist's own laboratory, as a medium of experimental research in new methods of expression. But it is a pre-form of art, not art itself, and to make it an equivalent to art simply means to take the blueprint for the house, or to abolish art in the name of art.

Guillaume Apolinaire, friend of Picasso, poet, essayist and one of the most stimulating spirits of the beginning of this century, wrote nearly forty years ago on the subject of tradition versus modernism: "The best way of being classical is to be of one's time without sacrificing anything of what the ancients have taught us."

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THE Museum of Modern Art must be given credit for following a rather cautious course in the pursuit of abstract happiness. In accordance with its self-designed task, it has tried to cover the whole of contemporary art, its origins as well as its latest developments, by organizing large retrospective exhibitions of such artists as Munch, Klee, Demuth, Modigliani, Braque, Soutine, etc. Its greatest achievement is perhaps to have brought to America a sense for the *continuity* in art and, with it, for the interdependence of the various artistic styles and movements in our time.

Recently, in the rivalry between the three leading museums of New York, concerning the extent to which flirtations with the dead-end kids of the absolute should be permissible, the Metropolitan Museum, under the pressure of influential groups, has opened its highly respectable halls to the new movement by displaying some of it within the historical framework of Egyptian mummies, mediaeval armor, antique vases and French impressionists. The result was not very satisfactory, the more so since some of the more important abstract leaders turned down the invitation on the grounds that the jury had no understanding of "advanced art"—a term widely used by the avant-garde and yet not quite comprehensible, unless one tries to introduce the idea of "progress" into art, thus implying that a Giotto or Fra Angelico were less "advanced" than, for instance, a Rubens because they had not yet fully discovered the geometrical laws of perspective drawing.

The Whitney Museum, on the other hand, is entirely dedicated to furthering all contemporary *American* art. By doing so it seems to have no difficulty in combining the realistic approach of the Hopper-Burchfield-Benton tradition with the apocalyptic strokes of the abstract shock brigades. Yet its efforts to keep out of the ideological fights on 8th Street and to show both sides of a picture, have resulted in a somewhat aimless, noncommittal versatility. It exhibits almost everything that is being painted or sculptured on Main Street these days.

There is a certain academicism even in its desire to be unacademic, a boldness that seems to swing out of balance when confronted with the problem of how to discriminate between the good and the bad. This became evident at one of the museum's recent exhibitions where some fine sculptural work by Lipschitz, Zorach, de Creeft, Harkavy, Gabo, Grippe, etc., was assembled along with mechanical devices in brass, lead, wire, plastic and other "ersatz" materials which in the proper rooms of the Whitney appeared more like the remains of a day's work in an airplane factory. Of all the studies in applied metallurgy displayed, I liked best the rusty, functional beauty of a lonely radiator loaned to the museum by a true expert on plumbing, boring and soldering.

The efforts of the Museum of Modern Art to establish itself as a clearing center for the appreciation and evaluation of art in this country are not seriously offset by occasional, all too extended excursions into the depths of the unknown. I refer in particular to the last large survey on "American Abstract Art" to which Andrew C. Ritchie wrote a scholarly but not invulnerable introduction. Along with much learned discourse as to the history of abstract art in America and the arrival of the "second wave," which has reached its peak at this moment, Ritchie's book contained statements which cannot be accepted without challenge—for instance, that the businessman as the patron of the artist in the bourgeois epoch was inclined to accept only such pictures as he could readily understand and which related to his concept of "prettyness" and idealistic-objective representation in painting. (Why, then, we must ask, has the same businessman suddenly changed his mind and now buys Picasso, Klee, Miro, etc.? Are we to assume that his membership at the Museum has converted him overnight into a man with non-objective objectives?) Further the book suffers from an over-zealous attempt at categorical classifications, which in America one delights as-

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sociating with the German mind. Thus we learn that Nogushi belongs to the "expressionist-biomorphic"; Spencer on the other hand to the "architectonical-mechanical-geometric" faction in the parliament of the abstracts.

The exhibition itself was rich in material and, within its desired limitations, of instructive value. And yet—what a contrast between Kandinsky's early spiritual intensity and this mass exhibit of interchangeable, endlessly repetitious exercises in blue, yellow, red, green. With the exception of Feininger, Hartley, Knaths, Demuth, Marin and possibly DeKooning, Hoffmann and a few others—most of them belonging to the older generation —we find here that "dead world of stylized forms" of which Kandinsky warned more than forty years ago when he wrote:

"The danger of a purely ornamental art stood clearly before me; the dead world of stylized forms could but frighten me. Only after many years of patient work, concentrated thinking, careful experiments, and gradual development of my faculties did I find myself able to experience form in an abstract way. Only by increasingly deeper penetration into these unmeasurable depths was I able to arrive at the 'painting form' with which I now work."

★

ONE thing should be made clear: The rejection of its midcentury-offspring does not imply that I am against "Modern Art" as such. I am for Rouault, for Braque, for Picasso's earlier works, for Feininger, for Chagal, for Knaths, for Marin, for Hartley, for Ben Shahn, for Lipschitz, for Moore, and as much for DeKooning as for Hopper and Burchfield. These men, after all, have rendered a tremendous service to our contemporary experience by depicting certain aspects of modern life, even in its crudeness. Lewis and Anderson did similar work in the field of literature.

In short, I am for everybody who believes in the dignity and integrity of his craft, no matter whether he calls himself an abstract, a semi-abstract, a surrealist or an expressionist (although it must be admitted that Hopper, for instance, surrendered too often to slick magazine taste). But I am against emptiness which pretends to be profound, and definitely against the "Metaphysics of the Wallpaper."

Will abstract art in America survive? Or will it die out, as it almost did in Europe, with the sad, whistling sound of a deflating balloon? The last word has not yet been spoken. After the cult of "revolt for revolt's sake" we may just as well see again the long overdue cult of the "revolt for *quality's* sake."

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Books

Europe Between Democracy and Anarchy. Ferdinand A. Hermens. Notre Dame. $4.

IT WOULD be a loss if the generality of Professor Hermens' title were allowed to obscure the well-defined issue he discusses. In the work itself the issue is perfectly focused: it is the question of whether democracy can be maintained under conditions of proportional representation, a system of election which has won wide support in modern times, especially in Europe.

At first glance it might seem unrealistic to augur the success of a democratic government from so formal a thing as the system of choosing representatives; but the extensive evidence collected by Professor Hermens shows the contrary. And here let it be said that this is an inductive study. The author presents to his readers a thoroughgoing survey of representative governments in various parts of the world in an effort to find some correlation between their stability and power to govern and the means by which their parliaments are chosen.

This survey leads him to characterize the majority system of election as "positive democracy" and the system of proportional representation as "negative democracy." The advantage of the majority system is that it places in power a single cohesive group, which has declared its intention, and which has been chosen by the voters to carry out a definite program. The disadvantage of the system of proportional representation is that it leads to the "fractionalization" of political life; that it thus renders the formation of a government with a single will very difficult; and that such governments as it leaves possible usually totter from crisis to crisis as they bid for support from minor parties in the effort to keep up their voting strength. This circumstance often leads to a condition of "parliamentary paralysis," and in such conditions the appeal of direct action may become very strong.

Nowhere does the problem of reconciling democracy with authority and action come out more clearly than in this difference. In theory, democracy provides a *pro rata* representation of every group, force, or unit of opinion large enough to be counted. Yet if it does nothing more than this, it may not provide a government which can govern. Somehow there has to be an institutional arrangement whereby the preponderating force can take over and constitute itself the government. The vanquished minority may remain vocal, but it must not be allowed to put a spoke in the wheel at every opportunity to impede the work of the governing party.

Few have understood this better than Abraham Lincoln, whose observations on majority rule made in the First Inaugural Address are appropriately quoted on Professor Hermens' title page. In this very connection it is interesting to recall that in the election of 1860, Lincoln polled only 1,866,000 votes out of 4,680,000 cast, or a plurality of hardly 40%. Had a system of proportional representation been in effect in this country, it seems questionable whether a vigorous policy could have been pushed in that crisis.

I HAVE emphasized that this is an inductive study, and let me say further that the author carefully traces the role of proportional representation in the rise of Italian Fascism and German National Socialism. In regard to the former, he notes that after the election of 1921 "there were in the Chamber . . . fifteen Communists and thirty-five Fascists, including Mussolini, none of whom would have been elected under the majority system." With reference to Germany, he writes that after 1930: "Hopelessness and despair spread all over the country, in particular among the young generation, and the extremists used the ample opportunities given them by PR [proportional representation] to exploit it to the full." Within three years Hitler was Chancellor of the Reich.

Such are the facts; as to the generalization to be made upon them, I think it would be hard to improve upon that of the Italian scholar whom Professor Hermens quotes: "The majority system asks the voter to do something which he can do, namely, to give an answer to the concrete question concerning political leaders and the measures they propose. PR demands something from him which he cannot do: he is asked to exercise an option between different political world outlooks which he is not able to understand."

Professor Hermens' book is a valuable document for contemporary political science, but I would not seem to take it for granted that he will convince everyone. Actually there are vexing questions at the heart of the problem he discusses. How much should one concede to the expediency of workability? Surely some governments which have been admired for their efficiency or for their survival value have contained dangers to the spirit. Is it well to try to get along without some conscious option between political world views? Is it right, after all, to suppress the "polar positions," as by his account the majority system tends to do? Sometimes the middle ground, which it appears to encourage, turns out to be a dead center. These questions will trouble some consciences, but it is all to the good to have a thesis made which will affect us at that level.

RICHARD M. WEAVER.

A Certain Widow. Joseph Dever. Bruce. $3.

JOSEPH DEVER'S second novel is another one about Boston, a city whose mixed antecedents and fixed traditions make it the continual wonder and exasperation of the rest of the nation. Dever's Boston is not Marquand's or Mrs. Keyes's,

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but closer to the Balkan kingdom of Joseph Dineen's *Ward Eight,* or even the clerical barony of Henry Morton Robinson. And as in *The Cardinal,* it is sometimes difficult to separate fact, fiction and charade. In spite of the author's disclaimer, some of the characters are identifiable. This can result in a curious kind of taxidermy, and even divide the reader's attention.

A Certain Widow is the story of Catherine Ronayne, who has taken over the editorship of the Charlestown *Bulletin* after the death of her husband. (This is in the prosperous and unsuspecting twenties, and Harding and Coolidge, Sacco and Vanzetti are glimpsed faintly in the background.) She has definite and ambitious plans for her two sons: Martin, the elder, will go to Harvard Law School after Ignatian College, and Francis will enter the seminary and be guided by his mother's advice in the quest for ecclesiastical honors. Her vexation at the shy intransigence of Francis, in contrast to Martin's success, finally gives way to the realization that it is Francis who has never failed her. Mrs. Ronayne comes off badly as a Boston-style woman of the pharisees, but the novel saves itself with the account of the frustration of her plans for Martin because of his romance with Althea Parkley, a Back Bay divorcee much more real and believable than her name.

This second excursion into the drama of elfin Irish and brooding Brahmin in Boston's liveliest ward is excellent narrative, constructed with a sound understanding of the novelist's single purpose, and not suborned by the much-extolled virtue of compassion into awarding shining destinies to all the participants like medals at a prize day. The promise of Dever's first book is enlarged and made more definite. In *No Lasting Home* he had not yet resolved the problem of the college poet, the writer of glowing young-Saroyan sketches, filling the larger and more tiring frame of the novel. The solution to the problem emerges in this second book. It is clear in a luminous chapter about a college prom, in a sequence of lovers' meetings in which romance wins out over accepted principle. If Dever's adults are rather thin and tentative folk, it is in the "wild integrity of youth" that the area of his artistic authority lies. In that precinct too, because he knows it best, he will make the significant books of his bright future.

FRANCIS SWEENEY.

The Princess of Cleves. Madame de Lafayette. Translated by Nancy Mitford, New Directions. $1.50.

THIS new translation of an old French classic could not appear more opportunely. In these days of public crime investigations it is good for men to be reminded of a tradition of honor and moral beauty that has flowed and ebbed through centuries of literature and life. Today it hardly reaches the lowest markings on the breakwaters, and one dips therefore with a special sense of refreshment into the clear and quiet depths of *The Princess of Cleves.*

There is a quality—a sense of "lose honor, lose everything," a respect for obligation and responsibility—that gives this book more than historical interest. Such interest it has, abundantly, in its radiant picture of the court of Henry II, and in its position as perhaps the first novel of sentiment and of analysis of motive and character. But this interest fades beside the fascination of the story of a pure and beautiful married woman who comes to love—and to deny, even when she needs to no longer—one of the most attractive men in fiction. The simple unfolding of her awareness of this love and of her successful struggle to preserve her integrity is in every sense masterly. "Her life," the book closes, "provided an example of inimitable goodness." Inimitable, yet believable; and believing it is some compensation for Costello.

Miss Mitford's contributions are the translation itself, an introduction, some biographical notes, and a bibliography. The translation is neither slavish nor rebellious; it preserves the simple, lively lucidity of the original. The introduction is less successful. Here Nancy Mitford, the author of *Love in a Cold Climate* and *The Pursuit of Love,* takes over, and she gives full rein to her acknowledged gift of wit and mockery. The result is pleasant reading, but one wonders how correct the emphasis is and how necessary is a knowledge of such things as the sexual irregularities of Princess Henrietta's husband to an understanding of either Madame de Lafayette or the Princess of Cleves. The biographical notes, happily placed at the end, are adequate, though sometimes sketchy and reminiscent of the answer of one of Miss Mitford's own characters to the question of who was George III: "He was king. He went mad."

Madame de Sévigné, the great letter writer and the lifelong friend of Madame de Lafayette, called *The Princess of Cleves* "one of the most charming things." It is still that.

ROBERT WICHERT.

Collision of East and West. Herrymon Maurer. With an introduction by Hu Shih. Regnery. $4.50.

THE author of this book starts from the hypothesis that the dominating fact in our world is the fact of cultural collision. The book is an attempt to discern the nature of the collision between the Western world and the Far East. Mr. Maurer plans to write a number of other books on the same theme, dealing with the collisions between the West and Russia and between India and the West, internal collisions within the Western world, and the theory of collisions in general. This is an enormous task, and Mr. Maurer's qualifications for undertaking it appear insufficient to enable him to succeed where others better equipped have failed.

One would expect the present volume to be the best of the series, for Mr. Maurer has lived in China and written articles on Japan for *Fortune.* But the book is disappointing. He seems to feel that he has adequately informed the reader on the

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nature of traditional Chinese civilization by giving him a superficial summary of the supposed teachings of Confucius, Lao-tzu, and a few other lesser philosophers. With regard to pre-modern Japan he is less disappointing.

Mr. Maurer improves somewhat as he approaches the present. He deals intelligently, if briefly, with the problems which have confronted China and Japan during the past century in the course of their effort to modernize themselves. The events of the last decade or two he sees as dominated by a four-cornered collision involving China, Japan, Russia, and the United States. To this collision he devotes seven chapters of uneven quality. His treatment of Japan is again fairly good; he analyzes accurately the factors that led to her defeat by the United States and gives an intelligent and impartial summary of the American occupation.

His views on China generally reflect those of his former patron, Henry R. Luce. He can see very little that is evil in the Nationalist Party, and almost no failings in Chiang Kai-shek. For this reason his analysis of the recent civil war in China is "Hamlet" without the prince. The real explanation of the outcome of the Chinese civil war seems to be so unpalatable to Mr. Maurer and many of his fellow-countrymen that, despite its simplicity, it is not yet generally accepted. It is simply that the Chinese people became disgusted with the policies and acts of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang, and chose Mao Tse-tung and the Communists as the lesser of two evils. Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States played a determining part in the making of this choice.

Mr. Maurer's brief and superficial chapter on postwar Korea leaves the reader with the impression that he regards Syngman Rhee as a worthy leader of the Republic of Korea. It is a pity that so many members of the South Korean National Assembly take an opposite view and perversely regard police rule, mass executions of political prisoners, and slowness in undertaking urgent social and economic reforms as a not wholly acceptable alternative to Communism.

I say "impression" advisedly, because the effect of this book on the reader is one of a series of vague impressions rather than one of clear-cut arguments and conclusions. Mr. Maurer generally avoids committing himself on controversial issues and fails to give any concrete recommendations as to what course the West ought to follow in its dealings with the Far East. He says, quite rightly in my opinion, that we must treat other peoples not as actual or potential instruments of policy but as friends and equals, but this commendable sentiment is hardly concrete enough to be of much help to our statesmen or to the public.

Perhaps I am expecting too much of Mr. Maurer, but he has set his sights high and has accordingly invited criticism. It does not seem too much to ask that writers on the Far East stop feeding us so much Con-

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fucius. Confucius' relevance to recent Chinese history is almost nil. I could give Mr. Maurer the names of two very distinguished American students of China, both men far more learned in traditional Chinese civilization than he or I; one of them dates the beginning of modern Chinese history from 1895, the other from 1911.

HAROLD C. HINTON.

The Wall of Separation between Church and State. Conrad H. Moehlman. Beacon. $3.

OSTENSIBLY, this little book is concerned with the establishment clause of the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, but as with so many of the Supreme Court's partisans in the controversy over that clause, the real issue to Dr. Moehlman is other than constitutional.

In order to place the amendment of 1789, he gives us the revelations of Liberal Protestant ecclesiology anent the First Century Church, with heavy invocation of Harnack, Cadoux, La Piana, Guggisberg, and the unpublished works of Rauschenbusch. He summarizes the pre-Reformation history of Europe in a rich but entirely predictable story of "documentation" with an exhortation never to let it happen again. The content is G. G. Coulton, but the style is E. Haldeman-Julius dappled with chronic italics and ennobled with telling single-sentence paragraphs. Thus:

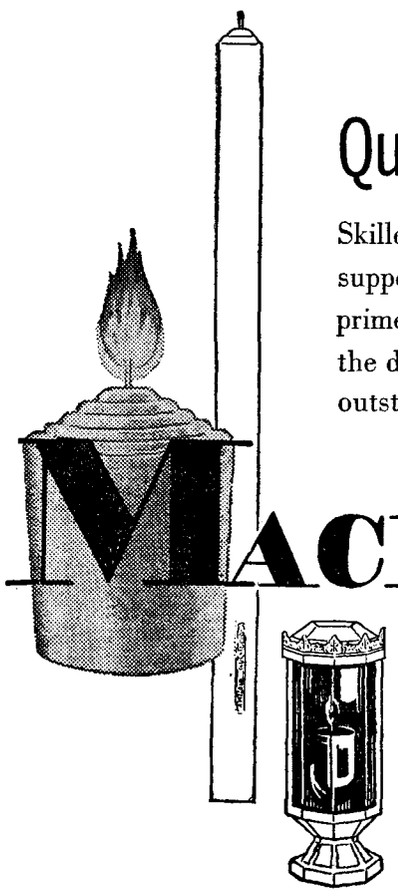
"In the American way of life, religious exclusiveness is out of date.

"In the United Nations' way of life, it would be disastrous. All prayers there must be silent."

For fifty years, Dr. Moehlman has been collecting slurs on the Catholic Church and he has amassed a great many. These he now strings together, interlarded with copious quotations from just about everybody you ever heard of: Celsus, Sorel, Mrs. Roosevelt, Tertullian, President Garfield, Dante, Dryden, Justice Pecora, the Emperor Valerian, Harry Sylvester and U. S. Grant.

All this festoons an attack on the *Catholic Directory,* a review of the McGlynn episode, dabblings in scores of state statutes and federal court decisions, a chapter on "The Splendor of Public Education," and the usual canard that Louis Veuillot said Catholics demand liberty on liberal principles and deny it on their own (no documentation on that one). Just as you start to untangle the misconceptions lodged behind one set of unwarranted conclusions, you are hurtled pell-mell into another: In his strident, monomaniacal way, Dr. Moehlman is quite readable. Of course, he himself doesn't write prose as lovely as "The American's Creed" ("I believe in America," etc.) by Guy Emery Shipler—the quotation with which he concludes his treatise.

Dr. Moehlman's two central theses are that the Catholics will get America if we don't watch out, and that the establishment clause forbids federal or state aid to religion.



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On the first point, he overlooks, *inter alia,* the fact that in Quebec, Eire, Belgium, and Austria, a strong Catholic majority, unreproved by Rome, has supported—through the State — non-Catholic schools. The same was true of pre-war Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and of the pre-Hitler Catholic German states.

On the second point, Dr. Moehlman follows the Supreme Court's Everson-McCollum rationale—which uses the legislative history of a Virginia statute to interpret the federal clause, instead of using the clause's legislative history. The Court's rationale is really no less fantastic than Dr. Moehlman's naive vindication of it: "The Virginia Assessment Bill was made part of the legislative history of the First Amendment in 1878." The Amendment was debated, of course, in 1789. Rather reminds one of the Donation of Constantine.

What the Court and Dr. Moehlman conspicuously fail to quote, despite all the irrelevant matter they do quote, is the actual legislative history of the establishment clause itself: The Annals of Congress for August 15, 1789.

The record here is short, clear and decisive. Madison and all the speakers devoted their whole effort to one point: the prevention of any preferential treatment of any religion. But explicitly to bar this is clearly to permit equal aid to all religions: chaplains, tax exemptions, etc. If equal aid had been barred, there would have been no point in speaking of preferential aid at all. The fact that Congress intended to ban preferential aid *must* mean that they did intend to permit equal aid. The Court's theory that they meant to ban any aid is patently false.

A number of books on this subject have recently appeared and their purpose seems to be to conceal this one simple, hard fact. The means they use is typified by the breathless, creaking ersatz scholarship—a great pastiche of irrelevance—found here.

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